

SECRET

GOFORTH

September 14, 1959

SUBJECT: Meeting with Alfred Bersinsh in New York  
on September 11, 1959

1. Bersinsh recently received a letter from the Latvian emigre publisher Imants Reitmanis who lives and works in Copenhagen, Denmark. Reitmanis writes: "There are more and more travellers from and to Latvia. We always give them our books but have to pay for books published by others. This is somewhat difficult". Reitmanis further states that some tourists from Latvia have shown great interest in Latvian emigrants' newspapers and books. Therefore it would be useful to have an assortment of various books on hand, ranging from refugee poetry to historical and political works.

B. asked whether it would be possible to obtain "a couple of hundred dollars" from the organisation the undersigned is working for and transfer this money to Reitmanis in order to build up a library for tourists' needs. Reitmanis would render a precise inventory list of books and provide any other information.

B. was told by the undersigned that there is no possibility for obtaining necessary funds, at least at the present time. Although the answer is negative, any further information on this and similar subjects received by B. will be appreciated. (A copy of the list of books recommended by Reitmanis for the suggested library will be submitted separately).

2. The Latvian newspaper "Laiks", published in New York, prints chapters from B.'s work about the last period of Latvian independence and the capture of the country by the Soviets. The texts appearing in "Laiks" are designated for emigrants. B. suggests to rewrite his work with a view to the readers in occupied Latvia, especially considering the forthcoming 20th anniversary of the incorporation of the Baltic countries into the Soviet Union.

Sketched structure of the booklet (approx. 100-130 type-written pages):

SECRET

DECLASSIFIED AND RELEASED BY  
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
SOURCE METHOD EXEMPTION 3B2B  
NAZI WAR CRIMES DISCLOSURE ACT  
DATE 2007

a. The period of independence; cultural and economic life; social progress and permanent rise of the living standards; great achievements on all segments of national life; bright aspects for the future.

b. Fateful developments in 1939; Hitler's and Stalin's secret pact and its consequences (the existence of this pact and many other important facts pertaining to this period of history are still unknown to wide circles of the Baltic intelligentsia); the establishment of Soviet military bases accompanied by Stalin's, Molotov's and others' declarations to respect the sovereignty of Latvia.

c. Military occupation of Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania by the Soviet army, exposing treacherous techniques with respect to the establishment of a puppet Communist regime; destruction of cultural and economic achievements; concrete data on the fast sinking of living standards of workers, peasants and intellectuals; Communist terror and its techniques; mass-deportations in June 1940.

d. Latvia under German occupation during World War II; activities of the national underground with the goal to regain independence; anti-Latvian Nazi policy; collapse of the German front in the Baltic area.

e. Return of the Soviet army in fall 1944; enforcement of Communist mass-terror climaxing in new deportations; continuation of anti-Communist guerrilla operations in the woods and rural areas; outline of Moscow's policy of denationalization and economic exploitation of the Balts.

f. Outlook with constructive and feasible ideas regarding resistance against the occupants' regime; appeal to live and work for a new free Latvia.

3. B. considers this suggested work a key issue in the field of anti-Communist propaganda for the Let's in their homeland. He invested a lot of time collecting exact material, paying much attention to established facts still unknown behind the Iron Curtain. In order to complete this work, B. would need approximately 3 weeks

**SECRET**

SECRET

special paid leave granted by his employer. Most of this time he would spend in libraries, partly at the Congress Library in Washington, D.C. In line with this idea, P. requested the undersigned to ask his superiors in Washington for necessary assistance. The undersigned's organization should call on P.'s employer, suggesting to give him three weeks off. B. stressed that the question of a fee for his booklet is of secondary nature; he is willing to rewrite and complete his work also without any payment.

The undersigned promised to bring this matter up with proper people but at the same time expressed his scepticism about the outcome.

4. B. offered his assistance for the preparing of special radio broadcasts via Madrid on the occasion of the 20th anniversary. B. suggests to start working on this subject soon in the interest of higher quality and because of many technical difficulties when preparing tapes or records.

5. Speaking about the spirits in his installation and among Baltic and satellite emigrants, B. stressed the feeling of growing depression because of the international situation and definite signs of weariness among American circles responsible for the struggle against Communism. B. is afraid that slowing down or even freezing propaganda activities will seriously endanger the positions of the free world. Sooner or later the United States will have to reactivate anti-Communist operations from much worse positions - as a result of indecision and lack of clear policy.


The undersigned had the feeling that B. is also worried about his own future and therefore is thinking about other possibilities for making a living in the field of journalism and propaganda.

6. B. is considering the question whether or not central Latvian organizations in America should start a campaign aimed at a certain control of funds of in-

SECRET

- 4 - ~~SECRET~~

dependent Latvia which are in US custody. According to B., these funds amount to ten million dollars. If the US Government would grant Latvian emigrants the right to dispose of the interests of the capital, much could be achieved with the help of this money. In B.'s opinion serious attempts have not yet been made in this direction because of the obviously reluctant attitude of Latvian diplomats accredited to the US Government. Some of these diplomats believe that using the funds of independent Latvia for active propaganda work might negatively influence the financial basis of the Latvian Embassy in Washington, D. C. as well as other diplomatic representations. B. requested the undersigned, who did not hesitate to show his deepest scepticism regarding this plan, to review this idea carefully. B. wants to start working on this problem as soon as the "present political illusions in the USA have faded".



**SECRET**